

SCREENING FOR ALCOHOL PROBLEMS

Step 1: Universal Screening Question

How often in the past year did you drink beer, wine, or distilled spirits?
(If never, stop screening; If answer is once or more, continue with the three following questions).

Step 2: NIAAA Quantity and Frequency Questions

1. On average, how many days per week do you drink alcohol?
2. On a typical day when you drink, how many drinks do you have?
3. What's the maximum number of drinks you had on a given occasion in the last month?

	PER WEEK	PER OCCASION
MEN	> 14 DRINKS	> 4 DRINKS
WOMEN	> 7 DRINKS	> 3 DRINKS
AGE > 65	> 7 DRINKS	> 3 DRINKS



Note: The CAGE tool can be used to further assess patient risk and alcohol dependency.

Optional: To identify those who do not drink regularly (fall below NIAAA guidelines), but binge drink sometimes (A person is an at-risk drinker if he/she has a positive response to this question): **In the last year, did you drink more than 5 drinks on one occasion (more than 4 drinks for women, adolescents, and adults 65 years and older)?**

Step 3: CAGE Screening

1. Have you felt you ought to **CUT** down on your drinking or drug use?
2. Have people **ANNOYED** you by criticizing your drinking or drug use?
3. Have you ever felt **GUILTY** about your drinking or drug use?
4. Have you ever had a drink or used drugs first thing in the morning (**EYE OPENER**) to steady your nerves, get rid of a hangover, or get your day started?

Person is an **at-risk drinker** if he/she has a positive response to

- One or more questions from CAGE and/or consumes alcohol in excess of the standards above

Person is identified as a **dependent drinker** if he/she has a positive response to

- The CAGE "Eye-Opener" question, or
- Two or more CAGE questions. Refer these patients to appropriate treatment services.